

VZCZCXRO7903
OO RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHMR RUEHPA RUEHRN RUEHTRO
DE RUEHUJA #0444/01 0711757
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 121757Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5499
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS PRIORITY 0958
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0405
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0098
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 1730
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0691
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 000444

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/W, INR/AA
DEPT PASS USTR FOR AGAMA
BAGHDAD FOR DMCCULLOUGH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/12/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EPET](#) [MASS](#) [MARR](#) [KPKO](#) [NI](#) [SO](#)
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR PROMISES TO REVIEW
AMISOM, DISCUSSES NIGER DELTA SECURITY

REF: A. ABUJA 417
[1](#)B. LAGOS 83 AND PREVIOUS
[1](#)C. STATE 019203

Classified By: Ambassador Robin R. Sanders for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) On March 12, Ambassador took advantage of a meeting with President Yar'Adua's Chief Economic Advisor, Tanimu Yakubu, to discuss pending decision on the GON AMISOM deployment. Primary focus of meeting was in the context of previously scheduled appointment to review the bilateral Framework for Partnership and specific trade and investment issues such as upcoming TIFA and BIT talks in the U.S.(non-security subjects to be reported septel). After Ambassador noted that Peace and Security needed to be strengthened as one of the Pillars in the Partnership, so that the USG received a response for its offers on the Niger Delta, she noted that from indications it appeared that the GON was no longer keen on the Somalia peacekeeping deployment. Ambassador added that the USG hoped the GON would live up to its almost two-year commitment on this issue. Yakubu then volunteered his thoughts on AMISOM. The CEA, stressing that this was his personal view, noted that peacekeeping activities have "endeared Nigeria to the rest of the world. He said in his opinion the AMISOM deployment would be "a vote of confidence for Nigeria." Admitting that he was not a military strategist, Yakubu opined that it could be useful to "define roles" for Nigeria and other parties in AMISOM, i.e. he saw Nigeria's PKO strength as being in "the hinterlands," with others providing "cover from threats from the sea and air." He said that he had expressed his support for targeted involvement in AMISOM to the Foreign Minister and others. The Ambassador noted that she had highlighted to the FonMin the weekend of March 7-8 the need for the GON to make a final decision on AMISOM (Ref A), stressing to Yakubu that the USG needs a deployment date if the GON is willing to commit, and mentioned that the original GON offer was now two years old. She added that we need to see GON boots on the ground no later than May 2009.

[1](#)2. (C) Realizing the need for a decision soonest, Yakubu turned to his aide and instructed him to set up a meeting for the CEA with the FM, National Security Advisor and Minister of Defense to help force a decision. The Ambassador noted

that the USG had been hoping for a GON deployment by May and asked the CEA to convey to her anything he learned about a final go/no-go decision and timing if the decision ended up being positive. She pointed out that the USG had arranged equipment to support the Nigerian deployment and shippers were ready to move the equipment to Somalia. Yakubu promised to get back to the Ambassador in the coming days. In the course of the conversation, Yakubu said Nigeria was more likely to be proactive on peacekeeping if the U.S. would "stop flogging" Nigeria, citing criticism of the 2007 elections in the Human Rights Report (HRR). The Ambassador stated that those criticisms in the HRR valid; were well-known to be based in fact; that the USG supported electoral reform efforts, and that she was not aware of specific current criticisms in public by herself or other American officials against Nigeria. She then pushed him to provide her with an additional example of USG public flogging of Nigeria, which he in the end admitted he could not do.

¶3. (C) Ambassador then pointed out that the new Minister of Defense had a copy of U.S. offers on security related to the Niger Delta, which she also passed to the CEA, noting that some trainings and other assistance could have long lead times--therefore early decisions on U.S. offers would allow specific preparations to move forward. She stressed that these past U.S. offers were there to assist, not lead, efforts by the GON to find a political solution to the Niger Delta, and help build the capacity of the military. Ambassador then noted the current U.S. training going on now for GON forces in Kaduna as well as the upcoming APS ship visit week of March 16 that will provide additional capacity

ABUJA 00000444 002 OF 002

building for the Nigerian military. Yakubu replied that "neither the U.S. nor Nigeria were happy with Nigeria's inability to produce up to its OPEC quota," or security in the Delta, citing the prevalence of "sophisticated weapons" in the Delta. He also noted that the U.S. and interested NGOs exercised a "moderating effect" against overly aggressive GON military actions. At the same time, he lauded efforts of some Niger Delta governors to work closely with the GON military's Joint Task Force and expressed his hope that the number of those engaged in criminality could be brought down. He said the President hoped the new Niger Delta Ministry would focus on a few effective areas of intervention but now appears to lack the capability to do so and asked that the U.S. and other donors assist the Ministry in developing the ability to deliver on projects and policies for the Delta.

¶4. (C) Comment: Chief Economic Advisor Yakubu is part of President Yar'Adua's Katsina Mafia and wields a lot of power within the GON. Although he carries the title of Chief Economic Advisor, in many ways he functions in a supra-ministerial with his prowess cutting across a range of issues, including attending cabinet sessions. Having him weigh in on AMISOM might be helpful as he is certainly closer to Yar'Adua than Foreign Minister Maduekwe is, and also carries much more sway in within the cabinet than the latter. The Mission will continue to push the GON in the right direction on the AMISOM issue.

SANDERS